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LETTER DATED 20 JUNE 1997 FROM THE SECRETARY-GENERAL
ADDRESSED TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL

I write to inform you of my current intentions concerning my mission of good offices in Cyprus.

In a communication dated 17 April 1997 addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/1997/320), I stated my determination to pursue intensified efforts to bring about a comprehensive settlement of the Cyprus issue and that I hoped that it would be possible for me to convene direct talks between the two leaders. To that end, I appointed Mr. Diego Cordovez to prepare and assist me in chairing the next round of the inter-communal talks.

I should now like to inform you, and through you the members of the Council, that on 9 June I wrote to the two leaders inviting them to a first session of face-to-face negotiations to take place in the New York area from 9 to 13 July. These face-to-face talks will constitute the beginning of a process which should continue as long as may be needed to achieve agreement on a comprehensive solution. I envisage that this first session will be followed by another one in August and a third session, if necessary.

In order to avoid a prolongation and even a perpetuation of preceding inconclusive dialogues, I firmly believe that there is a need for new approaches and procedures. Inasmuch as the elements needed to work out a settlement are at hand, I believe that it would be most appropriate to embark upon a sustained process of direct negotiations leading to the conclusion of instruments that will constitute a comprehensive settlement.

On 27 January 1997, I wrote to the leaders of the Greek Cypriot and the Turkish Cypriot communities to underline the importance I attached to finding an early settlement of the Cyprus problem. In February and April I had the opportunity to discuss the Cyprus problem with the leaders of the two communities, who expressed their readiness to make further efforts to reach a comprehensive solution. The consultations held between the two leaders and my representatives in recent months have been valuable in clarifying aspects of the task of achieving our common objective of a viable and comprehensive solution to the Cyprus problem.

In its resolution 1092 (1996) of 23 December 1996, the Security Council stressed its support for the Secretary-General's mission of good offices and the importance of the concerted efforts to work with the Secretary-General towards an overall comprehensive settlement. In late April 1997 the permanent members of the Security Council also fully supported the early convening, under the aegis of the United Nations, of direct negotiations between the leaders of the two Cypriot communities in order to secure an overall settlement. A number of Governments, as well as the Presidency of the European Union, have appointed special envoys and representatives in support of the efforts carried out within the framework of the good offices mission of the Secretary-General. The active, firm and full support of all concerned, and particularly of the Security Council, is indispensable if the current efforts are to bring results. I therefore ask you, and through you the members of the Council, and all concerned, to urge the parties to embark upon a sustained process of negotiations that will lead to the conclusion of the instruments that will constitute a comprehensive settlement of the Cyprus issue.

I should be grateful if you could bring this matter to the attention of the members of the Security Council.

(Signed) Kofi A. ANNAN